Transforming Development in Education: From Coloniality to Rethinking, Reframing and Reimagining Possibilities

Crain Soudien and Moira V. Faul

AN INTRODUCTION

The role of education in the making of colonialism has been well established (see, *inter alia,* Abdi, 2012; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Rizvi et al., 2006). This literature shows how education has been used, first, to authorise and legitimate colonialism, its development narrative and, particularly, the claim it makes of representing the apogee of human achievement. It also shows, secondly, how education has been used to secure the consent of the subjugated, under the premise that it is acting in their best interests. Reflecting on this literature, Matasci et al. (2020) comment that 'these studies demonstrate, among other things, the relevance of long-term historical analyses to the understanding of developmentalism. However, they often fail to fully appreciate the complex, changing and sometimes contradictory processes that shaped the link between education and socioeconomic change' (p. 4). In this volume, we broach some of the complexity to which Matasci and his colleagues alert us. That complexity is the residue left behind by colonialism—the marks it has imprinted on our worldviews, aesthetics and understandings of who we are, our relationships with each other and the imaginaries we are able to draw on in forging pathways into the future for ourselves as individuals and communities. These marks constitute 'dominance', a position of control that seeks to tell us how we should express our humanness, how we think, how we act and how we relate to each other. It seeks to prescribe how we narrate the story of our pasts, manage the complexity of our present and think of the future. As a political project,

this endeavour has been enormously successful. It has configured, even in what we have come to think of as 'radical' thought, our understanding of progress and development. We continue to struggle to see how significantly colonialism has determined our ontological and epistemological framings of who we are as human beings and what we should aspire to.

This volume brings together the contributions of a group of scholars who have had the privilege of serving as NORRAG Senior Fellows. NORRAG is the Global Education Centre of the Geneva Graduate Institute and a Global Network for Policies and International Cooperation in Education and Training, whose mission is to surface under-represented expertise to support diverse stakeholders in addressing the global complexities of education and development. As Fellows, we contribute to this mission by raising different aspects of contemporary decolonisation debates as they pertain to international development and education. Our point of departure is to work consciously and critically with these issues in seeking to make sense of the relationship between education and development. Our hope is that we will contribute to the process of opening up the discussion of how we move forward in the world and position the work of education in deliberately generative ways. Moving beyond geographies of colonisation to its essence—domination—this volume addresses questions of unlearning, data coloniality, the corporatisation of higher education and restorative reinventive and reparative action, and we challenge ourselves and our readers to reimagine pathways to alternative futures by practising epistemic humility (Srivastava, this volume) and epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, 2009) to support action towards epistemic justice (Odora Hoppers, 2002) and more equal futures. The chapter introduces innovative and diverse ways to look at colonial development's legacy—different forms of injustice and the planetary emergencies it has thrust upon us—which, against this backdrop, opens up the question of the reparations and reparative work we now need to be considering before finally envisaging and envisioning alternative futures. Throughout, we engage with these questions in the spirit of dialogue with each other and the reader in a spirit of learning, unlearning and relearning as an act of humility.

In doing so, we align ourselves critically with the manifold decolonial discussions unfolding in many parts of the world. This discussion has many dimensions, accents and interests. Of most concern to us are our planetary and human futures. We ask questions and explore possibilities, as a result, in relation to the concepts of reparation, recuperation, redress, rectification and redistribution. How, we ask, can these concepts—as

analytics and modes of engagement—help us better understand and, thus, develop praxes of justice and possibility beyond the conditions of our present dominance? Are we able, with all the intellectual affordances and social innovations that are being forged in little-known areas of the world, to outline for ourselves alternative syntaxes, vocabularies and perspectives that offer us new sensibilities of what constitutes development? As important, are we, with these affordances and examples, able to model and practise new signifying gestures, habits and modalities that will, first, help us pierce deep through the veil of certainty and into the telos that sits behind colonial understandings of development and, second, engage the full amplitude of our imaginations as we discuss and decide where we as a world could go? In responding to these questions, it is necessary to provide some elaboration on the problems surrounding the processes of development. We begin with the matter of coloniality and, in relation to this, set out our understanding of the role of education.

COLONIALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

To bring us to our first question—that of transforming development—it is necessary to briefly situate the condition of coloniality. Many conversations about decolonisation focus on the colonial project that was formalised at the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884 (when the world's major European powers agreed among themselves how they would divide large parts of Africa), and processes of independence after World War II. However, the formalisation of colonialism (in the Berlin conference) was not a thing in itself. It was not a historical interlude without antecedents and without precipitating and activating impulses. Imperial expansion into and the subjugation and commercial exploitation of colonies by imperial metropoles such as Amsterdam, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Lisbon, London, Madrid, Moscow, Paris and Tokyo pre-date the Berlin Conference. And some continue into the twenty-first century in many areas of the globe. Some colonial projects not only sought to dominate or exploit Indigenous populations and environments but also to displace or replace local peoples with settlers from the colonising power while replacing their previous economic, intellectual, political and social systems. Colonisation involved the subjugation of large swathes of the world and the creation of deep structural inequalities based on complex intersections of 'race', class, culture, religion and gender.

The analysis of *coloniality* that we address in this volume examines the *ongoing effects* of these deliberate efforts to dominate, exploit and

control other territories, people, environments and economic production. That is, how coloniality continues to shape all aspects of the social order in which we think and act; and how it defines that which opposes it or does not conform to it as disorder. Tracing continuities with historical colonialism helps us to better understand our contemporary world and its enduring relations of dominance, and also empowers us to propose ways to rethink, reframe, reimagine, reinvent, restore and repair development and education towards more just and sustainable futures.

COLONIALISM, MODERNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Formalised colonialism was, as Buzan and Lawson (2013, p. 1) argue, a 'downstream' consequence of modernity. We need to understand modernity as the historical period in which we currently find ourselves—what was and what now remains. Modernity began in Europe in the late sixteenth century with the eclipse of feudalism embedded in religious orthodoxy and, consequently, the shift to an 'enlightenment' characterised by new ideas of personal freedom, rational thought and scientific and technological development. Central to modernity, now a 500-year-old project, is that it brought to the world ideas of human progress and development. These ideas, which were cultivated out of the intellectual ferment of a Europe in deep transition, are now assumed to be universal. Europe's passage out of religious fatalism has been transposed onto the world as the only template for *knowing* and *being*—an epistemological encyclical with accompanying ontological prescripts. Most relevant for our discussion here are two of modernity's anchor tenets, namely, (1) scientific rationality—an 'outlook'—as the process by which 'objective truth' can be determined, and (2) growth, the infinite capacity of humankind to bend nature to its interests. The first depended on a classificatory schema that located all of life, natural phenomena and, actually, things in general into identifiable 'types' that could be understood in their pure internal logics. The most damaging of these, deployed in colonial dominance, was racial classification—the ordering of human beings into the base types of 'caucasoid', 'mongoloid', and 'negroid'—in descending order of worth. Out of this emanated, in coalescence with conceits of science, the hubris of human perfectability, expressed in the glory of European civilisation. Thus, in this ordering of the world, anything outside of modernity is judged to be disordered and therefore lacking, behind and deficient. Everything else taking place elsewhere in the world was of no real consequence. From Europe emanated the 'laws' of

civilisation and progress. These were presented to subjected people as gifts to the world to understand and explain all the phenomena, manifestations and expressions of all of nature—including social life—and to bring continual 'progress' to the world. The conceit behind this was that in the example of Europe, the world would find the template for its development.

Colonisation occurs in the broad ambit of modernity's political and economic diffusion into the world. This sixteenth-century project is a crucial element of 'the intertwined configuration of industrialisation, rational state building' processes that subsequently took place in key parts of Northwestern Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century (Buzan & Lawson, 2013, p. 2). Intrinsic to this configuration were two co-constitutive elements, one internal and the other external. The first was state formation; the second was imperialism. State formation involved intense class formation characterised by the emergence of a powerful capitalist stratum alongside a deep and poor working class. External to these new states, representing imperialism, was the establishment of colonies as sites for resource extraction and the control of cheap or free labour. If the state was the engine, the working poor and the colonies supplied the engine with fuel. Control of the colony required different but related strategies in different parts of the world: seizure of territories and land theft, extermination of Indigenous people in some places and complete subjugation in others and dismantling and eradicating of Indigenous modes of knowing, producing and living sustainably. The processes of schooling, which was systematised in many parts of the world in the middle of the nineteenth century, served to produce and reproduce the conditions of exploitation and oppression in the colonies.

We are now well into the twenty-first century and still under the aegis of modernity. The benefits it has brought to the world are abundant. Many people are living longer. For many, states of health have improved. More people can read and write than at any other time in our history. The technological capacity many of us have at our disposal is extraordinary. However, we wish to indicate our resistance to modernity's presumption that it does all that we wish for ourselves. First, we reject its fabricated self-narrative. Science and philosophy are not European inventions. European modernity did not introduce civilisation into the world. What we understand as 'Europe' has a past. That past includes the full inheritance of our global achievements over the last 5,000 years (see Kies, 1953). This global treasure trove includes deeply-grounded understandings of how our world works. Modernity has sought to erase them. We

also reject the idea of progress that European modernity arrogates to itself, its dismissal of alternative epistemologies and the presumption of undisputed authority for making sense of our universe. This 'Northern' way, as it is called, has brought us to the precipice on which we now stand. In its obsessive quest to bend nature to its desire for 'development', it has produced what many now call the 'Anthropocene', the time in our planet's history when humans have significantly impacted the dynamics of climate and ecosystems. In its quest for 'growth', it has ignored the social. We reject the false impression that what is produced in and by the privileged in the Global North (denoted as 'global') is placeless and universal, preferring to use language that underlines (rather than undermines) the actual equality of 'localness'—and the equal potential global usefulness—of knowledge produced in both the Global South and North (Kothari et al., 2019; Mbembe & Blomley, 2015; Savage, 2011). Most urgently, we reject the global inequalities that modernity—through colonialism—has brought to our lives.

The sum total of what we have before us is a paradox. Although the well-being of large proportions of humanity has improved, we are now, among ourselves, riven with unacceptable disparities, inequalities and discriminations. The gap between the rich and the poor in contemporary times has grown every year. In 2020, the world's 2,153 billionaires, based largely on what we call the 'industrialised North', acquired more wealth than 4.6 billion of the world's population put together. The 22 wealthiest men in the world have more wealth than all the women in Africa (Oxfam, 2020: para. 1). Poverty, precarity and social exclusion are the experiences of the majority of the world. Effective disenfranchisement follows. The majority of the world is generally spatially imprisoned in what is referred to as 'the South'. These 'South' and 'North' schemas are embedded in political, socioeconomic and psychosocial realities, most effectively summed up by notions of superiority and inferiority. They hide, however, internal contradictions that have been captured in theorisations of 'economic Souths in the geographic North and Norths in the geographic South' (Mahler, 2017, p. 1) or what Castells (2010) has called 'the Fourth World' to describe geographies of exclusion that are found not only in decolonised territories but also in the metropoles of the colonial 'mother-land'.

Formal decolonisation, as a process of the juridical disengagement of many metropoles or so-called 'mother countries', sees the birth of new countries taking their place as independent and sovereign polities in the global political landscape. With independence came the promise

of new beginnings. Born of the resistance that is inherent in colonial domination, these new beginnings provided opportunities for self-realisation and economic and human prosperity for all, not just the colonial elite. This process had profound implications for the world order. These, as the world discovered during the difficult days of post-colonisation, were complex. Breaking with the metropoles did not instantly yield the expected dividends of political and economic freedom, much less the kinds of development imagined that would lift underserved communities out of oppression and exploitation. Instead, many countries were quickly caught up in cycles of economic failure, political strife and cultural dependence. Formal decolonisation did not entrain decoloniality. Dismantling and recreating modes of governance, regulatory frameworks and instituting new cultures of democracy, social development and human rights proved to be enormously difficult. The effective replacement of colonial worldviews and hierarchies proved—and is still proving—even more difficult. A derivative colonial normative order came to define the texture and routines of the everyday. Old elites were replaced with new, rapidly upwardly mobile social classes. Socially and environmentally extractivist economic practices continued to define how people entered the labour market, participated in the production process and managed their social mobility.

The basic lineaments of colonialism—cultural, economic, political and social domination by the colonisers, alongside environmental and human extractivism—were transferred into the postcolonial period, which was overseen by new role-players drawn from the new elites. Although frequently forgotten, acts of resistance and rebellion are inherent to colonialism and coloniality and persist in contemporary demands for decolonisation. Territorial colonisation has been greatly reduced but coloniality persists. Formal decolonisation, as described above, needs to be understood separately from the contemporary decolonial project, which has arisen in several parts of the world and encompasses more than the formal autonomy of a state.

COLONIALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

It is now clear that education, the second question to which we alluded above, has occupied a central place in the maintenance of modernity and its derivative in colonialism and coloniality. It has been pivotal in producing and reproducing the colonial order in postcolonial societies (see Abdi, 2012). Historically, education has been used to secure

the ideological hegemony of the Global North. The world is ordered according to coloniality. Education systems, which operate everywhere on knowledge systems developed in the Global North based on an ideal rational scientific model, dominate educational thinking and practices (Tikly, 2020). The dominance of Northern 'standards' permeates education, both internationally through unequal comparisons (such as the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]) and domestically through the reproduction of injustice and oppression within educational systems, to the detriment of other knowledge systems and the people who embody them (Takayama et al., 2017). Thus, in 2025, African children continue to be taught about the history of Europe and tested to Northern 'standards', whereas children in the Global North have little systematic exposure to African history or knowledge systems. Moreover, African, Asian and Latin American women and men who defend their societies and land are described in Western media as 'environmental activists'. Their (non-Modern) understandings of their contexts, based on grounded and holistic conceptualisations of environments, societies and economies as essentially entangled that arise from their ontologies, epistemologies and affective systems, are ethnicised and exoticised as local beliefs and are effectively delegitimated.

This is not the 'development' we want. We want to build a world that has the capacity to sustain life. We want a world in which all of us, regardless of our differences, will live lives of dignity with a sense that we will be secure. We want a world where young people can live, learn and dream for themselves in fulfilling and caring ways; a world where they will develop responsibility for themselves and their wider world in generative ways that recognise and respect differences in all of their physical, figurative and mental forms; and to work with these differences sustainably. We want a world where we can live in a respectful relationship with other life forms and with our wider environment.

How we, as scholars, undertake this task is a complex question. We are aware of the multiple contradictions that surround our engagement; so, in this volume, we attempt to open up the discussion. We reflect on our place and role in the discussion of development unfolding in several parts of the world and how we might take it forward in generative ways. We use the word generative not simply to denote the process of being able to produce things, but to emphasise the virtues of sustenance and sustainability, and the capacity to act and respond to the needs of all life in respectful and thoughtful ways. Our principal concern lies with the inequalities and injustices that characterise our lives as people and

the discord that marks our relationships with each other and with our natural world. We also come to it with the deliberate intention of stimulating discussion, debate and, most critically, dialogue. In seeking to stimulate dialogue, we are conscious of the knowledge we have at our disposal, its endowments and its failings, of what it helps us to see and what it obscures. Our purpose, acknowledging the intensity of the arguments surrounding the discussion of education and development, is to clarify what we, from our positions of privilege, could contribute to the immensely important work that fellow scholars, activists and committed groups and individuals everywhere in the world towards imagining and making alternative and sustainable social and ecosystems.

WHAT DOES THIS VOLUME CONTRIBUTE?

As indicated above, we are Senior Fellows of NORRAG, whose conceptual point of departure is that dominant conceptions of development have been premised, even in what we have come to think of as 'radical' forms, on problematic ontological and epistemological understandings of who we are as human beings and what we should aspire to. In this volume, we discuss and debate the concepts of reparation, recuperation, redress, rectification and redistribution. We spar with each other about how these terms promote justice and the possibility of futures beyond the conditions of our present dominance. How might we return to dominance's classificatory and discursive frameworks? Implicitly, as we debate each other, we grapple with the significant and even determinative freight of our language. Can we, we ask, develop new languages, new signifying gestures and modalities that will, first, engage all of our imaginations and, second, pierce deep through the veil of certainty and into the telos that sits behind it?

As a result of this debate between ourselves, in invoking the prefix *Re* on the great acts of finding our humanness, we insist on thinking not of a return to anything, to any stasis, either that which now dominates us or that which dominance has sought to erase, but of beginning afresh. Beginning afresh is building on *all* that is good around us. We look with appreciation and respect to that which has been forgotten or deliberately displaced, and thoughtfully and thankfully recuperate what we need to. We will resolutely dismantle that which obstructs, impairs and harms our world, reminding ourselves repeatedly why we seek to move on from the damage and hurts we have inflicted on each other, and trying to better understand what reparations are appropriate. We will explore, as part

of this agenda, ways of entering discussions where we can, by inserting discordant notes where they are needed, playing with and celebrating the cacophony that exists in the world. To foster dialogue and look for opportunities to provoke. In stepping into this space, we seek to nurture and cultivate (as part of a zeitgeist distinct from the hubris and conceit of dominant understandings of development) comportments of wonder, curiosity and anticipation.

Research on education and development remains important, particularly against the background we have sketched above, and as many people around the world continue to push for greater self-determination and a sense of their own dignity, autonomy and equality, we wish to be active participants in this process. The importance of education has been given impetus by recent struggles in many parts of the world. In some of these struggles, the matter of dominance and its control mechanisms has become a question of urgent discursive and political engagement. In many countries worldwide, the idea of decolonisation/decoloniality has emerged as a holding frame for thinking about dominance and its deconstruction. Decoloniality is not used as an excuse for inaction. Nor is it irrelevant due to the time passed since territorial decolonisation. Coloniality is with us now, shaping what and how we think, live, and value humans and other species. It seeps into all aspects of knowing, education, developing, and sustaining.

Setting the tone, flow and boundaries of conversations about transforming education starts with addressing coloniality. Decolonisation/decoloniality, of course, is interpreted in different ways in many parts of the world. It proceeds, however, from a consensus that the idea of "Europe" or the "West" (or indeed any colonial metropole) does not hold in its amplitude the full repository of how we as human beings comprehend our cosmos. Modernity, the Gobal North or the West do not constitute the last word in how we make sense of our diversity of experiences and is by no means the apex of what we as human beings are able to think and do. Decolonialists also hold in common the idea that the world has multiple stepping-off points for defining issues about our shared existence on this planet, for reasoning, for making arguments and taking positions around difficult questions and for offering solutions to the problems of the world. As emphasised by Garuba (2015, §19), a Nigerian poet who had been based in South Africa, this agreement captures the global urgency for the world to stand together in 'recogni(sing) and according value to the (knowledge of the) previously disadvantaged.…'

The edited volume *Transforming International Development and Education: From Coloniality toRethinking, Reframing and Reimagining Possibilities* aims to contribute to the current literature in at least three ways. After this introductory chapter, which sets the scene for the contemporary study of decolonisation, subsequent chapters seek—in innovative and diverse ways—to look at colonial development's legacy, in the different forms of injustices and planetary emergencies it has thrust upon us, and against this backdrop open up the question of the reparations and reparative work we now need to be considering before finally envisaging and envisioning alternative futures. Throughout, we undertake an academic critique of formal decolonisation and contemporary coloniality and move beyond critique to provide potential constructive ways forward to challenge contemporary relations of domination.

The chapters in Part I of this volume aim to rethink development to envisage a common world.

Iveta Silova, Hikaru Komatsu and Jeremy Rappleye encourage readers to shift their focus from the traditional emphasis on lessons learned—long a staple of international development discourse—to the more critical concept of what should be 'unlearned' from ongoing development practices. In this context, 'unlearning' involves fundamentally questioning and reconfiguring the established assumptions that underpin the development project. The authors urge their readers to 'learn to unlearn' (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, p. 32) as a powerful method for deconstructing the Modern/colonial framework of knowledge to explore and articulate alternatives.

Radhika Gorur and Minoli Wijetunga examine how new data technologies offer unprecedented opportunities to redress historical inequities while simultaneously having the potential to reinforce them and create new forms of marginalisation, dispossession and harm. Contemporary datafication—the process of turning many aspects of life into data that are then monetised—is marked by racial, gender and class biases, thus continuing the legacy of coloniality and the empire. To decolonise education data, this chapter explores contemporary 'data coloniality'—profit-driven extraction, dispossession and epistemic dominance—which produces effects similar to those of territorial colonialism on First Nations people and other minority groups, Indigenous knowledge systems and 'vernacular' practices. The authors envision more equitable and inclusive forms of data in education, emphasising the urgent need to address this issue to ensure equity, fair representation and the protection

of marginalised groups' rights while advancing social and environmental sustainability.

Crain Soudien highlights how universities often perpetuate dominance through economic and market-driven logics. This corporatisation of higher education, he argues, prioritises accountability through metrics such as citation rates and research grants, which shapes higher education in specific ways, putting quantifiable outputs before its mission as a force for decolonisation and sustainability. Soudien offers a new direction, envisioning a 'healthy' university (Honig, 2013) through 'cross-border praxes' (Odora Hoppers, 2021), which transgress orthodoxy and promote intellectual boundary crossing. He advocates for institutions that value disruption and transgression and foster an environment where these tendencies can thrive and propagate.

The second section reframes the process of development, centring collective recuperation, reparation and rectificatory justice.

Catherine A. Odora Hoppers questions whether 'development', as traditionally understood, can foster a sense of 'restorative action', creating a feeling of belonging for citizens. She conceptualises development (with Sachs, 1992) as a monoculture that undermines alternative approaches to society's reductionist and exploitative paradigm and limits humanity's ability to creatively contribute to our futures. This chapter pushes development towards future-oriented perspectives, proposing an alternative that promotes ethical, empowering and healing practices on the ground. Odora Hoppers examines the case of development education at the Department of Science and Technology, South African Research Chair at the University of South Africa. This initiative emphasises advancing restorative action theory and practice by utilising Indigenous knowledge systems to break epistemological barriers and applying transdisciplinarity to discourse, practice and thought to develop methodologies for systemic transformation. She concludes that restoration and healing can be achieved by adopting a pluralistic and ethical approach to development.

Arathi Sriprakash contends that despite decades of 'development', education globally remains profoundly affected by inequalities and injustices. She argues that the global development agenda has failed, even in its own limited terms, as a false promise and a flawed agenda that is fundamentally hierarchical, Eurocentric, paternalistic and dehumanising. Sriprakash highlights how, by ignoring the material and ideological links between colonial domination, capitalist exploitation and development itself, the depoliticisation of both education and development upholds rather than challenges the hierarchical structuring of the world.

Sriprakash asserts that while development cannot be 'fixed' within its existing framework, a project of 'repair' in its ruins can be envisioned. Rejecting the notion that development is an essential 'solution' opens the possibility of finding ways to redress the injustices that development has failed to address and has actively perpetuated.

Tavis d. jules and Nigel O. M. Brissett envision new development opportunities for the Anglophone Caribbean through reparations for the enduring impacts of chattel slavery, extractive capitalism and Indigenous dispossession, which have been pivotal in shaping capitalist modernity. They outline the historical contours of the development paradigm and highlight the violence of colonialism, extractive and racial capitalism, and the resulting material and epistemic consequences. Using reparations as their central conceptual framework, they propose two key strategies for transforming the current development paths of Caribbean societies: reforming the aid system and asserting the right to epistemic autonomy.

Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw and Cristina Delgado Vintimilla presents 'microfragmentos' of reparation and reinvention. These microfragmentos—small, fragmented and irregular pieces that remain incomplete—are part of a modest local political initiative stemming from a pedagogical project with Cañari women and children in the highlands of the Ecuadorian Andes, who are facing the twin encroachment of capitalist and neocolonial threats. Three microfragmentos—on growing, cooking and eating—connect reparation and reinvention through food practices. As women collectively embrace their ch'ixi, drawing on the Indigenous aspects of their identities, their practices of cultivating potatoes, preparing meals together and introducing children to their traditional dishes become acts of love, hope, dreams and joy. These acts transform their everyday lives, creating small moments to heal from the colonial traumas they have collectively inherited and continue to face while reinventing their existence in the modernised Ecuadorian Andes.

The third and final section further reimagines possibilities for development and education.

Vanessa Andreotti offers a poem that deconstructs sustainable development education and challenges the reader—viscerally, intellectually and emotionally—to imagine the policies and cooperation that might help to navigate or change the course of our likely future.

Prachi Srivastava questions why the idea of epistemic humility is challenging for some, while for others it has become instinctive, shaped by repeated experiences of marginalisation. She views epistemic humility as unsurprising and essential for all: as scholars and as human beings. In

response to the prompt 'Write it like you said it', she leads us through a blend of introspective narrative and storytelling, examining formal education systems through an anti-colonial perspective. Seeing educational institutions as perpetuating privileged knowledge through covert colonial practices, Srivastava argues that embracing epistemic humility is a crucial first step in reimagining and reconstructing education and its institutions. Although this remaking of education is possible, she stresses that the practice of epistemic humility by those in relatively privileged positions is vital to this reimagining effort.

Keita Takayama and Taeko Okitsu chart a 'middle path' between 'research for development', which informs and supports policy, and critical 'research of development', which scrutinises how policy is influenced by broader material and discursive contexts at the same time as it simultaneously shapes the issue addressed. The authors contend that adopting this 'middle path'—balancing policy practicality with critical reflexivity—requires three interconnected, nonsequential moves. First, they suggest evaluating policy against normative criteria that are external to the policy and its framing. Second, they emphasise the importance of engaging with the policy's overall structure and framing, even when these are problematic. Finally, they propose finding ways to rearticulate these structures and framings to expand the discursive boundaries established by the policy. This middle path ensures that researchers' recommendations remain meaningful to (even if not immediately actionable by) policy practitioners.

Finally, Kathryn Moeller offers a concluding commentary on the volume.

FROM COLONIALITY TO TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

It is difficult to justify ignoring the contemporary perpetuation of inequalities forged in the colonial era. The primary reason to decolonise development and education is, simply, justice. Colonial domination and exploitation enriched the colonisers as they impoverished the colonised, leading to inequalities between countries and between groups within countries. The purpose of decolonisation efforts is not to make people feel guilty, nor is it to provide an excuse for inaction. Rather, to transform education, decoloniality allows us to better understand the politics and power dynamics of what we do and how we do it; of where and how 'what counts'—and what we are instructed to value—as

knowledge, 'development' and education are produced and legitimated, by whom, and with what effect. Decoloniality requires us to take seriously the power relations that shaped the current world order and continue to sustain it. Decoloniality provides us with a more honest and evidence-informed appraisal of colonial pasts, and how they continue to be entangled with our present. If studying colonial pasts and presents as a topic allows us to examine evidence of historical exploitation, domination and abuse, then the move to decoloniality provides profound ontological, theoretical, axiological, and methodological contributions to contemporary research, policy and practice. If Modernity demands that we see knowledge, people and our Earth in one single way, with one single destination, then decoloniality invites us to notice the reality of pluriversality (Mbembe, 2015; Mignolo, 2007). Decoloniality opens our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to equally valuable multiplicities: multiple values and ways of ascribing value, knowledge and ways of knowing; methods and ways of doing; and ways of being and understanding being itself. Crucially, decoloniality brings us closer to realising what we can do differently to allow education to live up to its potential as a crucible for transformation.

We do not approach decolonisation/decoloniality uncritically. We are not interested in a project of recentring knowledge. In the interest of maintaining and building a critical agenda for thinking about alternative ways to development, we proceed on the premise that decolonised education holds the potential to challenge the dominant global narrative and empower marginalised communities, while laying out possibilities through which systemic inequalities can be confronted and exploring opportunities for thinking about the sustainability of our planet. Our aim is simply justice. In thinking then about what we could do, we have come to the decision that the least we can do is keep the dialogue open among ourselves. This volume provides the platform through which we make clear the positions from which we come and the perspectives we hold. However—and still from the places in the academy in which we find ourselves—we will try to advance opportunities for looking at the challenges in ways that are generative and new. We do so in the spirit of hope. In the spirit that we are all able to learn, unlearn and relearn again. Learning and unlearning are acts of humility and vulnerability. We acknowledge that we do not know everything. In this vulnerability we will continue, as we do in this volume, to collaborate to build and foster decolonial educational practices.

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